

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1050

By Sparks

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Harry Gill, Jr., upon his exemplary service as Rutherford County Director of Schools.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those outstanding professionals who have devoted their careers to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Harry Gill, Jr., is one such estimable educator, who has distinguished himself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, marking his fortieth year as an educator in Rutherford County, Mr. Gill has provided dedicated leadership and astute guidance to Rutherford County Schools as the Director of Schools since May 2003; and

WHEREAS, prior to his current position, he served as the principal of Cedar Grove Elementary from 1997 to 2003, the assistant principal of Rockvale Elementary from 1994 to 1997, the Summer School Director – RCS from 1993 to 1995, the assistant principal of LaVergne High School from 1988 to 1994, and the athletic director, attendance supervisor, teacher, and coach at Smyrna High School from 1972 to 1988; and

WHEREAS, as the leader of Rutherford County Schools, Mr. Gill has overseen tremendous academic improvement as the system increased its graduation rate from 84.7% to 91.6% in 2011, achieved district wide accreditation in 2010 from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and saw its Eighth Grade Explore test scores reach the national average in every category; and

WHEREAS, while gaining 11,000 new students during his tenure, Mr. Gill oversaw the establishment of the school district's first magnet high school and its first International Baccalaureate program, in addition to instituting Professional Learning Communities in all schools, a program now being modeled by other districts in the state; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Director of Schools, Harry Gill has made the Rutherford County School System a leader in the state with achievement and value-added scores, a feat which was accomplished despite receiving \$1,000 less per student than the state average; and

WHEREAS, he also expanded the partnership with the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department to include School Resource Officers in every school and created a comprehensive safety program for the district, including the addition of a safe schools manager; and

WHEREAS, the tremendous growth in Rutherford County has required considerable expansion of the school system and Mr. Gill has secured funding and overseen the completion of nine new schools and additions/renovations at thirteen existing schools during his tenure, including the new Stewarts Creek High School, which is under construction and will open in August 2013; and

WHEREAS, mindful of fiscal accountability, Harry Gill has initiated cost-saving measures for new schools which will benefit Rutherford County taxpayers for many years. Those strategies include more efficient school designs, geothermal heating and cooling, pitched metal roofs, energy efficient lighting and sensors, and water efficient bathroom fixtures at all schools; and

WHEREAS, inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame in 2009, Harry Gill served as the head coach of the Smyrna High School Lady Bulldogs basketball team from 1972-1988. During that time, he amassed a 345-140 record, including capturing the 1982 state championship, and was nominated for National High School Coach of the Year and named Mid-State Coach of the Year by *The Tennessean* in 1976 and 1982 and the *Nashville Banner* in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Harry Gill, Jr., is an extremely talented and compassionate administrator who works assiduously to motivate Rutherford County's students to reach their full potential, both as scholars and as citizens; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gill truly serves as an inspiration to his colleagues, faculty, staff, and students alike, and his friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know him; and

WHEREAS, Harry Gill, Jr., truly epitomizes the ideal of the dedicated educator who is wholly committed to the highest ideals of public service and quality education for all, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Harry Gill, Jr., upon his exemplary tenure as Rutherford County Director of Schools, salute his forty years of exceptional service to the children of Rutherford County and Tennessee, recognize his professional expertise and personal excellence, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.